



13th European Week of Regions and Cities

OPEN Brussels

DAYS 12 - 15 October 2015

The potential of Small and Medium Cities in Cross-Border Polycentric Regions

- Introduction -

Brussels, 15/10/2015





Speakers

- Marie-Josée Vidal – LU presidency
- Antoine Decoville – LISER
- Petra Schelkmann – Greater Region
- Sören Bollmann – Frankfurt – Slubice
- Petri Suopanki – Haparando Tornio



Trio Presidency Programme

- **Action 1** – Assessing the implementation of the Territorial Cohesion objective and the Territorial Agenda 2020
- **Action 2** - Territorial Scenarios and Visions of Europe for 2050
- **Action 3** - Specific legal provisions for border areas
- **Action 4** - Systematic and structured political debate on Cohesion (General Affairs Council)
- **Action 5** - **Small and medium-sized cities**



Common umbrella theme Action 5

- focus on metropolitan areas and regions
- about a half of the urban population in Europe lives in small and medium cities (SMC)
- SMC have their own specific capital and territorial potential
- SMC play a major role for the European territory
- Common umbrella theme of the Presidency Trio: how to better utilise the potential of SMC
- linked to the Trio Presidency assessment of the implementation of the territorial cohesion objective



Common umbrella theme Action 5

Contribution from Italy

- “inner areas”

Contribution from Latvia

- Economic development challenges and potentials of SMC
- Riga declaration

Contribution from Luxembourg

- small and medium cities in cross-border polycentric regions (SM in CBPR)

Terminology



SMC in CBPR

Concept

- The concept of cross-border polycentric regions (CBPRs) refers to the structure of polycentric networks that allow small and medium cities across borders to reach the critical mass for unlocking their development potential.

Underused potential due to:

- Less compact settlement structure in border areas
- Peripheral location / distance to national capitals
- Diverging legal frameworks (link to Trio Action 3)

Challenge of 'critical mass' → cross-border cooperation



Workshop 30/06/2015

Some general conclusions:

- **Setting-up/operation of joint infrastructure projects**
- **Important factors:**
 - Maturity of the cooperation process
 - Language barriers
 - Inter-personal relations
- **Challenges:**
 - Lack of long-term strategic thinking
 - Diverging legal frameworks (link to Trio Action 3)
- **Solutions:**
 - Innovative governance solutions



Suggestions for targeted actions

- Encourage networking & exchange of experiences
- (EU) funding opportunities should be open to address specific needs
- Promote role & potential in development strategies at European/transnational/national/regional level
- Encourage development of joint cross-border development strategies
- Strengthen cross-border data collection
- EU Urban Agenda: small and medium cities as a horizontal topic



Guiding questions for the workshop

What are your experiences?

What good practices have you developed?

Which obstacles still exist?

How do the European Structural and Investment Funds support the development of CBPR?

How could the cross-border cooperation of small and medium cities be improved?

What are your expectations to the national/European level?

What additional support is needed?